Lester H. Russell was born in Mitchell, Nebraska on May 4, 1904. Mary was also born in Mitchell on August 5, 1908. They were childhood friends; later became sweethearts and were married June 3, 1927.

The Russells moved to Riverton, Wyoming in the mid 1930s where they became acquainted with the Church of the Nazarene. It was there that they dedicated their lives to Jesus Christ. They later moved to Kinnear, Wyoming, a new farming community where there was no church. They started a Sunday School in their home which grew into a thriving “Sunnyside Church of the Nazarene”. Since that time many students from this church have attended Northwest Nazarene College.

In 1945 the Russell family moved to Nampa, Idaho so their children could attend the grammar school and high school located on the NNC campus. Four of their children also attended Northwest Nazarene College. Mary cooked at the college in the 1940s and the Russell home was always open to students.

Lester passed to his eternal reward on November 19, 1988 and Mary followed on November 25, 1988.

Criteria for awarding of scholarship

1. Awards are to be made to students who have financial need and who demonstrate potential for academic success.

2. Nominations are to be made by the Financial Aid Office for approval by the Scholarship Committee.

3. Students must be full-time, have a minimum 2.0 GPA, and meet other general scholarship requirements.